(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government are aware that these references are either not replied to within prescribed time limit by majority of offices while in other cases these are never replied by some Government offices, despite reminder, thus wasting huge amount of time in correspondence;

(f) whether Government propose to revise the existing instructions and also call for some progress reports on such references from all Government offices every month to watch implementation of existing instructions; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SMT. MARGARET ALVA) : (a) and (b) Yes. The detailed guidelines to deal with the references received from MPs. have been issued to all Ministries and other Government offices vide paras 57, 60 and 122 of the 10th Edition of Manual of Office Procedure (MOP) published in March, 1987.

2. These guidelines provide that communications received from MPs. will be attended to promptly and replied to within 15 days. However, where delay is anticipated in sending a final reply or information is to be obtained from any other Ministry or another office, an interim reply will be sent within a fortnight indicating the possible date by which a final reply can be given. In case a letter has been addressed to a Minister, it should as far as practicable be replied to by the Minister himself.

For keeping a watch on disposal of communications received from Members of Parliament, every section is required to keep a register of such communications. The position of their disposal and reasons for pendency need be placed before the Senior Officers at fortnightly intervals for scrutiny and orders for appropriate action where necessary. Instructions have also been issued to all Ministries/Departments to monitor the disoosal of MPs. references throueh their Internal Work Study/O & M Units.

(c) and (d) Yes. Para 57(2) of the MOP has been amended in October, 1993 which provides that a reply to an MP should normally be issued over the signature of the officer of the rank of Secretary only (as against not below the rank of Joint Secretary provided earlier).

(e) to (g) It is felt that the existing system of monitoring through the concerned Ministries/Departments is adequate. Further, these guidelines are reiterated from time to time for strict compliance.

Revision of Special Parliament Allowance of Assistants

4010. SHRI RAM DEO BHANDARI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government Employees Association had demanded that the amount of special allowance payable to Parliament Assistants in various Ministries be revised ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government did not revise the amount but had referred the demand to the Board of Arbitration for adjudication, long ago;

(c) whether the Board of Arbitration has not been taking up this matter for consideration on the ground that Government have to take a decision on a similar point in another matter;

(d) if so, by when Government would convey its decision on that similar points : and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to expedite the adjudication of the reference by the Board of Arbitration ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SMT. MARGARET ALVA) : (a) and (b) The Staft side in the Departmental Council (JCM) of the Department of Personnel and Training had demanded an increase in the rates of Special allowance end treatment of the allowance as pay for all purposes. The demand was not accepted and has been referred to the Board of Arbitration as per the JCM Scheme.

(c) to (e) The Board of Arbitration has taken a stand that the decision on the demand to treat special pay as pay for all purposes, which is pending in the National Council, should be awaited before proceeding further. As soon as a decision is taken in the National Council it will be placed before the Board of Arbitration for its consideration.

Employment of Compassionate Grounds

4011. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has recently given a Judgement relating to employment on compassionate grounds ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what are Government's latest instructions in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SMT. MARGARET ALVA) : (a) and (b)